Steve Harrington Is a Big Baby by Books In the Blood

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Summary: A long time ago Steve got drunk and admitted a secret to Nancy. He'd long forgotten; he thought she had too until she saw him in that dumb uniform. "I like that outfit. Makes you look like a cute little boy" she said, clearly amused. Steve didn't know what to say so he just said "Yeah...I hate it" "I thought you'd like it since you said you like to feel like a little boy..."

1. Chapter 1

It started with that uniform of all things. That damn, stupid uniform he hated putting on every single day and parading around in it in a mall full of people. It was pretty much like any other day, mindlessly slinging ice cream for endless streams bratty kids. That was until about half way through the day as his back was turned mopping up the counter with a wet rag between rushes.

"Nice outfit"

He was used to people teasing him about the childish looking clothes. But that voice made him turn around and hope that his ears weren't flaming red like he thought they probably were.

"Hi Nancy" Steve said, turning around and putting on the best smile he could. It wasn't easy; all summer he'd been forced to come face to face with his former classmates. All of whom were getting great jobs or were going to college in the fall. And where was Steve? Working in an ice cream shop because he was too stupid to get in anywhere. He hated it...the best he could hope for was to exchange a bit of small talk with Nancy, give her her order and get her out of there before she could realize what a loser he was now.

She gave him a sweet smile, almost like the ones she used to give him when she still liked him. "I like that outfit. Makes you look like a cute little boy" she said, clearly amused.

Steve flushed. Great...That was just the look he'd been going for trying to pick up women all summer…

Steve didn't know what to say so he just said "Yeah...I hate it" a bit resentfully, hoping she'd just order soon and get out.

Nancy leaned her elbows on the counter, moving in close so she could whisper "I thought you'd like it since you said you like to feel like a little boy" she said, grinning widely.

Steve felt his whole face heat up. Oh God, not THAT...

"That was a long time ago. I was drunk...didn't know what I was saying" Steve muttered, looking around the shop, glad no one else seemed to be paying attention.

That wasn't entirely true. He DID remember that night in little bits and pieces. He'd drunk entirely too much and woke up the next morning hungover. He hadn't remembered anything until Nancy had called him later that day and told him she'd liked how affectionate he'd gotten the night before. Naturally he assumed that meant making out and getting handsy which was usually what happened when he got drunk. But then it had hit him. He remembered lying against Nancy, trying to climb into her lap. His voice had gotten progressively babyish and he thought he recalled calling Nancy 'mommy' at some point. He was mortified...he'd begged Nancy not to tell anyone. The last thing he needed getting around school was that he was childish or that he had mommy issues. Nancy had promised not to tell and she hadn't, she'd never even brought it up again. Until now...

"Really?" Nancy asked quirking an eyebrow, "I thought you meant it. And I thought maybe I could do something about it."

Steve felt like his heart was stopping inside his chest. His stomach lurched because he was sure she couldn't mean what he thought she meant. All those fantasies where he'd imagined being held and taken care of in a way he dared not express were just that; fantasies...That stuff didn't really exist. And even if it did for some people it didn't for someone like him.

"Uh...what are you talking about?" Steve asked, feeling a lump growing in his throat. It was best not to say anything; he'd probably made some crazy assumption and if he mentioned it she'd think he was crazy. It was best to let her do the talking.

"I always thought the way you acted that night was really sweet...really cute "Nancy admitted. "You seemed so vulnerable...it was so unlike how you normally are. It made me want to give you whatever it was you needed. But you didn't want to talk about it again. So I left it...but Steve you just seem so...sad. Unhappy...lonely. I couldn't forget that anymore"

Steve felt the lump in his throat grow bigger. Definitely not because he wanted to cry or some dumb shit like that. But because he was embarrassed; he WAS unhappy, desperately so, but he thought he was doing a better job at hiding it. Clearly not if even his ex-girlfriend could see it.

Steve leaned in. "Nancy, you don't have to worry about me. Really...I don't need pity" he said, maybe harsher than he should have. But he didn't want anyone's pity especially Nancy's and especially on this subject.

Nancy wasn't offended or fazed like he thought she'd be. She just shrugged. "Hey, I didn't say anything about pity. If anyone's being selfish it's me. I want to take care of you. I want to see that side of you again. Sounds like it's all about what I want."

*I want to take care of you...*something deep and needy squirmed inside Steve, pushing aside all his barriers. He should be arguing but he couldn't. "What exactly...would you ….do?" Steve asked, barely daring to hope, his voice barely a whisper. Any minute he expected to wake up because, seriously, this had to be a dream.

Nancy grinned widely. "Come to my room after work and find out" she said mysteriously.

That phrase brought a whole deluge of memories, ones that were lost to him now. Climbing up to Nancy's room for a whole different reason...he didn't want that now (well not TOO much) but he had to ask.

"What would Jonathan think about that?" He asked, crossing his arms over his chest. He wasn't THAT guy, he wasn't a creep. Not anymore at least.

Nancy held up her hands. "Hey, I have no bad intentions. If you've got YOUR mind in the gutter then you've got no one to blame but yourself, Steve Harrington" she teased.

Steve laughed nervously, glad it wasn't anything like that, and glad he hadn't misunderstood her. "No I don't...I was just...checking" he said.

Nancy was still grinning at him when a group of kids care in behind her to order. "I'll see you later," she said with certainty, smiling at him one last time before walking out without even ordering. That made Steve wonder if she came here just to tell him that. What was she planning? How LONG had she been planning it? Had she really come all the way down here just for this? Suddenly, his legs felt weak….

The rest of the day was excruciatingly long. Luckily it was Saturday, their busiest day, so he kept busy but his mind was far from work. He kept messing up; he forgot to give some people their change, overcharged a few, dropped several cones, over filled milkshakes...he tried to focus more but all he could think about was Nancy and what she had planned. Desperately, he tried to bring up more memories of that drunken night to see how much he might have revealed to her but it was pointless. He couldn't remember anything.

Steve has never cleaned up and closed shop as fast as he did that night. He practically ran through the darkened, deserted mall to his car and peeled out of the parking lot. It was only when he got half way there that doubt began to creep into his mind.

Maybe he shouldn't be doing this. He wasn't exactly the type to be vulnerable and open with people. He was alarmed just by the fact Nancy could see as much as she did. What exactly would she see about him tonight? Would she ask him questions? Demand to know why he was such a freak? The very idea made him sweat. She had wanted to do this but then he began to wonder and worry she'd see too much….. think he was pathetic and weak and sad. He didn't want her or anyone to think that about him. She might have thought he looked cute in his little sailor outfit but maybe she'd regret him coming over after she realized how pathetic he was.

On the flip side he began to worry this was a trap. After all, why would Nancy suggest something like this out of the blue? It didn't make any sense. It'd been years since that night; what had suddenly brought it up? Did he really give off that desperate of vibes that she remembered one stupid drunk night all that time ago? And honestly, what was she getting out of it? No woman wanted some guy who was desperate and needy. He began worrying he'd go all the way over there and she wouldn't even be there. He imagined her and Jonathan

sitting around laughing at what a big baby Steve Harrington was. He shuddered…..

He knew he was being irrational but that didn't stop him from sitting his car parked outside her house for way too long, sweaty palms grasping the steering wheel. He'd almost convinced himself to leave, his stomach churning with anxiety when he remembered.

"You seemed so vulnerable...it was so unlike how you normally are. It made me want to give you whatever it was you needed….."

The way Nancy had said those words, the sincerity in her voice and the openness in her eyes...he could tell she was being honest. She really wanted to help him and she really saw how he felt deep inside where he wouldn't let anyone in. How long had it been since he'd felt anyone looked at him and saw him, really SAW him? Too long, he thought, feeling a wave of sadness. Could he really let her in? The idea scared him…..letting people in always ended up hurting him. But he looked up at Nancy's window, bright with light and welcoming. And something inside him tense and worried unraveled at the thought of what was behind it; understanding…..caring… warmth….. Feeling a burst of confidence, Steve opened the door of his car and made his way across the lawn.

2. Chapter 2

Walking up to the house and looking up at Nancy's room he had to laugh a bit; it'd been awhile since he'd done this. As he began the climb, his muscles protested; somehow he'd remembered this being easier. His arms ached and his legs struggled a bit to find purchase but he was determined. No way was his falling off the house and breaking a bone at a time like this. How awkward THAT would be to explain...

Steve hesitated for a fraction of a second before knocking on Nancy's window; he didn't want to give himself a chance to wimp out. After a few impossibly long few seconds, Nancy pulled the curtains back and opened the window.

"There for a second I thought maybe you weren't coming" she said with a smile. It was like she could tell just by looking at him how many doubts he'd had.

Steve felt so awkward; his palms were sweaty and he tried to wipe them on his shorts without being too obvious about it. He didn't see the point in trying to act cool about it when she seemed to know how uncool he already was; he doubted he could pull it off. He seemed to have trouble in the 'cool' department these days.

"Yeah…..I thought maybe I wasn't too "Steve admitted. He shifted his weight from foot to foot as Nancy seemed to study him. He felt so AWKWARD it was painful…it felt like the first time he'd ever been in Nancy's room. Actually, that wasn't true at all. He'd not been nervous the first time he'd been here. His only aim then was to get into Nancy's pants and he was actually quite good at that. This? This was much harder. Being this vulnerable was much harder and very much out of his element.

"Having second thoughts?" Nancy asked, frowning slightly. She seemed disappointed at the idea that he might not want to do this (whatever the hell THIS was) anymore.

"No, not at all" Steve was quick to say, "I was just…..worrying over nothing I suppose….." His worries seemed a bit silly at this point.

Nancy reached out and touched his arm. It was the smallest touch but his skin felt warm under her touch. It felt foreign; it didn't feel like she used to touch him all the time. It was tentative and NEW somehow…and Steve liked it.

"You always think too much Steve" Nancy said, smiling at him.

"Yeah, I doubt that…."Steve said with a self-deprecating laugh. He didn't think anything of it; at this point it was habit.

Nancy frowned at him disapprovingly. "Hey, there will be no reason to worry here. And there certainly won't be any putting yourself down" she said, letting go of his arm and gave him a stern look. She looked and sounded a bit like a tough teacher.

"If you say anything else mean about yourself I'll have to give you a smack" Nancy chided him.

Steve froze; the idea of that both made him scared and excited. "O….okay. I won't then" he said, his voice shaking a bit. This was different…..very different. Steve really didn't know what to do or to say; he just wanted Nancy to TELL him what to do. That was definitely different and Steve liked it.

Nancy was back to smiling at him again. "That's better. You're going to be a good boy, aren't you?"

Something snapped inside Steve's mind. Nothing had changed about him and yet he felt like something very big HAD changed about him. He felt like he was turning in on himself, shrinking inside. Did he want to be GOOD? Yes, he definitely wanted to be good. He felt like he wasn't much of the time.

"Yeah…..yeah. I'll be good" Steve agreed enthusiastically, nodding.

Nancy grinned. "Good. You just follow me and don't worry about anything" she said as she reached out and took his hand.

They'd held hands plenty of times, of course, but this was different. As her fingers wrapped around his, he felt as if he were OKAY. Like nothing was going to happen, like she was going to take care of him…He felt like something was swelling up inside his chest and he

swallowed it down. Nancy squeezed his hand gently and led him to the side of the bed.

"Alright, have a seat. And relax" Nancy said.

Steve plopped down on the edge of the bed, doing his best to relax; it was somehow hard to do when he didn't know what was going to happen.

Nancy crouched down next to his feet and began to undo his shoe laces. "We gotta get these shoes off….make sure you're comfortable" she said. She gently untied his shoes and then slid them off his feet. It made Steve very small…..probably no one had taken his shoes off for him since he was kindergarten. It was somehow strangely intimate, only marred by Steve's worry that his feet might stink.

"There, isn't that better? All your little piggies are free" Nancy said before tickling his toes gently. Luckily he wasn't too ticklish but it still made his feet curl up and he squirmed a bit. But it had the effect he was sure Nancy was looking for; he was laughing and instantly feeling more at ease.

Steve was lying back against the bed, still laughing when Nancy sat down next to him. He started to sit up but she put a hand against his chest and held him back. Nancy sat on the opposite end of the bed, and gently repositioned his head so that it was lying against Nancy's lap. He looked up at her and instantly felt relaxed. When she put a hand on his head and began to run her fingers through his hair, his eyes closed and he sighed involuntarily. With one hand in his hair, he felt Nancy's other hand come up to his face, gently stroking his cheek. Steve was hit with a wave of emotion he couldn't describe; it was like there was an ache inside his chest. It was almost like it HURT…..something hurt…..but he was happy. It felt good and hurt a bit at the same time. Steve leaned into the touch and took a breath that made his chest ache.

"Aren't you just a sweet, cuddly little baby?" Nancy said in a sweet, cooing voice as she rubbed his cheek. Steve opened his eyes and looked up at her but he found that he couldn't think of anything to say. He just felt warm, relaxed…..SAFE. He felt like he could stay here forever.

"Steve is so little he can't even speak" Nancy said, in amusement, pinching his cheek slightly. "That's okay. He needs his bottle anyway"

Bottle? Steve wondered what she meant. He turned slightly as she reached over to the nightstand. Sitting on it was a bottle of milk. Steve almost laughed; of course that's what she meant by bottle, what else would she mean? Of course it wouldn't have occurred to him that she would actually put the effort into finding a baby bottle or that she would think of that as being something he wanted. Of course he realized that he DID want it very much.

"Ah…..you don't want this do you?" Nancy asked, waving the bottle in front of his face, seeing he was watching her.

Steve reached up to grab it but his fingers had barely touched the glass before she pulled it away. "Babies don't hold the bottle. Mommies do" she said.

Steve's hands fell down next to his side; she was going to feed him? Why was that so appealing to him? It was though; his breath caught in his chest slightly as he turned so he was curled closer to her. His forehead brushed against her shirt and he could smell the scent of her perfume. *Mommy…..feed me…*it was a thought that rang through his head, something old and long ago inside him and yet something always there.

Nancy finally brought the bottle toward him, the latex of the nipple tickling his lips slightly before he opened his mouth enough to fit inside his mouth. It felt foreign and strange; he could feel a few drops of milk dripping out of the tip of the nipple but he didn't really know how to suck on it properly. Babies made it seem easy but he just ended up smacking too much and not getting much out. He was glad his eyes were closed so he didn't see Nancy and feel more foolish. It shouldn't be so hard to suck on a damn bottle.

"It's alright, go slow. Take your time and it'll feel right" Nancy assured him, rubbing through his hair with her free hand.

Steve breathed a sigh against the bottle; mostly that was the problem, that he was overthinking it. So, he tried not to think at all but just take in how everything FELT...and what a difference it made.

He felt how limp and relaxed his body was, draped over Nancy's lap like a piece of wet spaghetti; no tension in his muscles at all. He felt how warm and comfortable his head was, nestled against Nancy's lap. He brought his hands up to gently hold onto her sides; it made him feel safe and as if he wasn't going anywhere. And he felt Nancy's fingers running through his hair as she began to quietly sing a nursery rhyme. He was safe, he was calm...he was small. For once he didn't have to worry about all that dumb shit he'd worried about all summer. He didn't have to worry about anything.

Then, it got easier with the bottle. Because it didn't feel strange and foreign; it felt right. He was just a baby doing what babies do. He could easily suck the milk out of the bottle. It was slightly warm and it was comforting as it slid down his throat and into his belly.

It was so nice Steve didn't want it to end but he knew the amount of milk in the small bottle wasn't endless. As he reached the end he slowed down his drinking, focusing totally on Nancy's gentle fingers and the soft lull of her voice. He felt so unlike himself; it was almost as if he were someone else or rather a very different version of himself.

It brought up a memory, one he didn't even remember he had. It had to be one of his earliest; he couldn't have been more than 2. He was in sunny yellow painted room, sitting on his moms lap in a rocker. She was reading him a book that had pictures of Winnie the Pooh in it; he could feel the warm fuzziness of his footed pajamas against his skin as he leaned against her. He had a bottle of warm milk in his hands and he drank it easily, slowly as Mom read to him. That memory had such a sense of pure contentment to it; even though Steve knew he was the same person as he was then everything about him had changed. As a baby, he didn't have to worry about anything. Everything was done for him; he didn't have to make decisions that he'd ultimately screw up. At that time people loved him not because of how he looked or how cool he was or what he became; all the affection he received was totally and completely unconditional. At that time he was happy just existing as he was. It wasn't like he felt now; lost, empty, adrift in life desperately hoping someone would love him.

As Steve finished the last of the milk from the bottle, the nipple

making an empty sound as he sucked out mostly air, Nancy gently pulled the bottle out of his mouth and pulled him closer to him. His face nestled against her stomach, her arms wrapping around him to hold him and rub his back gently. He was satisfied...safe...happy...That's when he felt that feeling again. That small, wonderful feeling that was so buried in his past he thought it was gone forever.

Steve was totally and completely overwhelmed. He was hit with a wave of euphoric happiness that made him realized fully how overwhelmingly unhappy he'd been and it was too much. His eyes stung with tears no matter how tightly he closed them and his throat burned. He couldn't remember how long it'd been since he'd felt the need to cry so badly. He hoped Nancy couldn't tell; his hands reflexively tightened on her.

But something must have clued Nancy in to his turmoil. Maybe it was how desperately he clung to her, maybe it was the little hitch of his breath as it caught in his chest, feeling like the stab of a little knife in his lungs, or the dot of moisture in the corner of his eyes he couldn't stop. But she knew...she knew.

Steve felt a hand against his cheek and he looked up at her despite his blurry vision. "It's okay to cry, Steve. Don't hold it all in; let it out" she said, her voice cracking as if she too might feel like crying. And her words were enough to unlock what little resolve he had left.

It was like a wave of tears exploded out of Steve; he'd hoped if he was going to cry it might be just a few little tears. A crocodile tear, a little sniffle; dignified crying. But that wasn't what came out at all. Tears poured from his eyes as he sobbed so hard he could barely breathe. So deep in his emotion he could still hear a soft sob come from Nancy too. When Steve's sobs gained volume Nancy gripped him tighter.

She leaned up against the head board of the bed, pulling Steve with her. Steven leaned against Nancy, his head against her chest; she wrapped her arms around him, hand against his head as she crushed him to her. Steve kept trying to stop but he found he literally couldn't. He couldn't remember how long it had been since he'd cried and now it felt as if he was crying for years of sorrow. Just as he was

trying to stop crying, Nancy was rubbing his back and whispering 'it's okay, Steve. Let it all out..."

That's what Nancy told him to do and so that's exactly what he did. And it felt good; even though it hurt it was good to let it hurt instead of pretending that it didn't. He'd been pretending everything was okay for so long that he didn't realize how badly it was hurting him.

Eventually Steve could feel the sobs beginning to gradually slow down. His stomach and chest hurt and his face felt red and puffy. But against Nancy's chest he could feel himself beginning to grin. She rubbed his hair and whispered "that's a good boy" against his ear. He pulled his legs up, curling to as much as he could, wishing he could sit in her lap. He was finally HAPPY...

He didn't want it to end but after a quiet while Nancy was holding his face and pulling back so she could look at his face. He could tell she had cried a little too, nothing like the wet sobbing mess he'd been, but she was smiling at him. One of her fingers pressed against his cheek, rubbed across his face and brushed a tear gently away.

"I bet this little boy is feeling better" she said before reaching over to grab a tissue. He closed his eyes and let her wipe the tears away. He didn't want to feel big again but he could feel that small feeling fading slowly away as self-consciousness crept in about how much he'd just lost it in front of Nancy.

Steve thought he should say something but he couldn't think of anything. He didn't know how to put in words how he felt or how thankful he was that Nancy did this for him. He didn't know how to let her know how big a deal it was for him not only to have someone treat him small but to be so vulnerable. He still couldn't quite believe Nancy even wanted to do any of this. Because he was paranoid he looked over at her to see if he could see any sign of regret or disgust in her face now that she'd seen him like this. Did she find him gross now that she'd fed him a bottle and wiped tears and snot off his face? It didn't look like it, but it seemed she felt the somewhat awkward tension in the room as she came to join him sitting on the edge of the bed.

She was silent for a while; she put her hand on his leg and it was

warm and comforting.

"Are you okay?" She asked him, rubbing his leg. Her voice was more normal and less of the mommy voice she'd been using earlier. Steve bemoaned that loss a bit.

"Yeah...yeah I'm fine. Great actually" Steve said honestly. "Thank you...really. Thank you Nancy, for doing all of this. I can't believe I totally lost it on you like that..."

"Steve, don't worry about it. You needed to let that happen. I know it wasn't easy" Nancy said. Steve turned to look at her and she smiled at him. "And I like taking care of you. I really do. You don't have to hold the weight of the world on you"

Her words hit him; it would be nice to have some place ,some ONE that he could comfortable with. The world made him feel like he DID have to be a certain way. Strong, tough, with it...when he didn't feel any of those things. Steve could already imagine what it would be like to do this again; what a relief that would be. But he hardly dared to hope Nancy would do it again.

"Yeah...it was really nice" Steve said, giving Nancy a smile.

"You could stay...if you want to. I could tuck you in nice and comfy." Nancy said, looking hopeful Steve might not leave. It gave him hope; she was just as reluctant for the safe feeling to go away. And the thought of Nancy tucking him into bed was amazing; just the idea alone was enough to make him feel smaller again. But he couldn't do it.

Somehow sleeping in bed with Nancy seemed like pushing it. And even though he hoped he wasn't the same creep he used to be he was feeling raw emotionally and didn't want to tempt himself.

"I appreciate that but I think I'm going to go ahead and go home" Steve said.

"Okay" Nancy said quietly mostly hiding her disappointment.

Nancy did his shoes for him, sliding them back on with care and tying the laces for him. While she was still crouched in the floor she

looked up at him with a big smile.

"Thank you for letting me see that part of you, Steve" she said sincerely.

"The crybaby part of me?" Steve asked with some humor, still feeling a bit self-conscious. His eyes still were red and puffy from the crying.

Nancy was serious. "The emotional part of you. The real part of you" she said.

Steve didn't know what to say and he was glad when Nancy stood and wrapped her arms around him in a tight hug. He rested his head down on her shoulder, feeling as if he could melt into her. It was no secret he'd been striking out with women all summer and as much as he missed sex (come on he was still human!) THIS was what he missed more than anything. Someone hugging him, someone caring for him. He didn't want to let go.

Nancy hugged Steve tighter. "Steve, can I tell you a secret?" She said.

Steve couldn't imagine it could even be close to being as embarrassing as the secret he'd shared with her. "Yeah" he said quietly

"I really liked this and I definitely want to do this again" Nancy said

Steve couldn't stop smiling. Nancy wanted to do it again too. Not only was she not so disgusted with him that she regretted doing it in the first place, she wanted to do it again, something he'd hardly dared to hope for. Steve couldn't remember being at such peace.

"Me too, Nancy….me too" he agreed.